

NEWS RELEASE**Farm Numbers/Land in Farms
January 31, 2005****North Dakota Farm Numbers Stable****North Dakota**

The number of farms and ranches in North Dakota during 2004 is estimated at 30,300 and remains the same as 2003 but is down from 30,500 farms during 2002, according to the North Dakota Agricultural Statistics Service. All land in farms totaled 39.4 million acres, which has remained the same since 1999.

The number of farms, at 30,300, remains the lowest level since estimates were first started in 1910 when there were 74,400 farms. North Dakota farm numbers peaked in 1933, at 86,000. All land in farms, estimated at 39.4 million acres, is 3.30 million acres below the high of 42.7 million acres set in the period of 1950-1954.

Small farms in the economic sales class of \$1,000-\$9,999 during 2004 decreased 100 operations from 2003 to 8,700 and farms with sales of \$10,000-\$99,999 declined by 200 operations to 11,800. Farms with sales of \$100,000-\$249,999 declined by 100 to 5,400. In the \$250,000-\$499,999 sales class, the number of farms increased by 100 to 2,700 while farms in the \$500,000 plus category increased by 300 to 1,700. Expanded number and land in farms classes over \$100,000 were added last year back to 1998.

A farm and ranch is defined as any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year. Government payments are included as sales. The annual estimate includes farms with their entire acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program or other government programs.

United States

The number of farms in the United States in 2004 is estimated at 2.11 million, 0.6 percent fewer than in 2003. Total land in farms, at 936.6 million acres, decreased 2.25 million acres, or 0.2 percent, from 2003. The average farm size was 443 acres in 2004, an increase of 2 acres from the previous year. The decline in the number of farms and land in farms reflects a continuing consolidation in farming operations and transfers of agricultural land to competing uses.

Farm numbers declined in the 2 smallest economic sales classes and rose in the 3 largest economic sales classes. Part of the reduction in the small economic sales classes was due to normal attrition, mostly retirements. In addition, some operations transferred to larger economic sales classes by enterprise expansion. However, the majority of the changes in the economic sales classes were due to rising incomes. Many operations near the top of their economic sales class in 2003, moved into the next larger economic sales class in 2004.

As a result, the largest percent changes from 2003 occurred in the smallest and largest economic sales classes. Farm numbers declined 1.6 percent, to 1.18 million farms, in the \$1,000-\$9,999 economic sales class. Meanwhile, farm numbers increased 4.7 percent, to 76,740 farms, in the \$500,000 or more economic sales class. The number of farms with at least \$10,000 in sales rose 0.6 percent from 2003 and the number of farms with at least \$100,000 in sales rose 2.0 percent.

For More Information Contact:

Number of Farms by Economic Sales Class, 1999-2004

Year	\$1,000- \$9,999	\$10,000- \$99,999	\$100,000- \$249,999	\$250,000- \$499,999	\$500,000+	Total
--- Number ---						
North Dakota						
1999	8,400	13,800	5,900	2,100	800	31,000
2000	8,400	13,400	5,700	2,300	1,000	30,800
2001	8,500	13,000	5,600	2,400	1,100	30,600
2002	8,600	12,600	5,600	2,500	1,200	30,500
2003	8,800	12,000	5,500	2,600	1,400	30,300
2004	8,700	11,800	5,400	2,700	1,700	30,300
United States						
1999	1,187,390	648,710	188,340	90,940	71,900	2,187,280
2000	1,183,480	638,380	182,900	89,370	72,650	2,166,780
2001	1,189,920	621,490	176,290	87,400	73,530	2,148,630
2002	1,201,840	604,570	168,820	86,550	73,580	2,135,360
2003	1,199,270	600,540	167,220	86,550	73,280	2,126,860
2004	1,180,560	599,170	167,930	89,070	76,740	2,113,470

Land in Farms by Economic Sales Class, 1999-2004

Year	\$1,000- \$9,999	\$10,000- \$99,999	\$100,000- \$249,999	\$250,000- \$499,999	\$500,000+	Total	Average Size of Farms
--- 1,000 Acres ---							- Acres -
North Dakota							
1999	3,400	13,900	12,300	6,500	3,300	39,400	1,271
2000	3,400	13,500	11,900	6,700	3,900	39,400	1,279
2001	3,300	12,700	11,900	7,100	4,400	39,400	1,288
2002	3,000	11,800	11,600	7,500	5,500	39,400	1,292
2003	3,000	11,200	11,500	7,900	5,800	39,400	1,300
2004	2,900	10,700	11,300	8,000	6,500	39,400	1,300
United States							
1999	129,810	282,565	201,005	146,245	188,835	948,460	434
2000	128,320	279,265	198,705	147,295	191,495	945,080	436
2001	127,090	274,895	197,065	148,605	194,415	942,070	438
2002	126,625	271,155	196,305	149,170	197,045	940,300	440
2003	124,770	270,055	196,055	150,135	197,635	938,650	441
2004	120,840	266,495	193,915	151,555	203,795	936,600	443

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